

School Counselor Placements

The research is clear that there is a positive correlation between increased student achievement and having access to school counseling programs staffed by fully credentialed school counselors. Michigan schools are strongly encouraged to provide all students with comprehensive school counseling programs led by a Michigan educator with [one of the four credentials for school counselors](#).

Recommendation

MDE strongly recommends and encourages school administrators to staff and assign fully credentialed school counselors who are uniquely trained according to preparation standards to provide direct and indirect services aligned with the MI Guidance Comprehensive Model and American School Counselor model (ASCA). School counselors provide the following services: academic and career development, social/emotional development, advocacy, and leadership. These professionals should not be assigned inappropriate duties that could take them away from their primary responsibilities of delivering services to students. Examples of appropriate and inappropriate activities are listed in the [ASCA National Model Executive Summary](#), including the recommended student to counselor ratio of **250/1**.

Services

Access to school counselors is also imperative in Michigan's implementation plan within the following sections of the [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) (ESSA): Student Support and Enrichment Grants, Well Rounded Educational Opportunities and Safe and Healthy Students. An individual is considered to be "performing any of the duties related to a school counseling program" if his/her position description or day-to-day duties include any or all of the following elements as articulated by the ASCA National Model.

Academic Development

- Advising a student on credits required to successfully complete the [Michigan Merit Curriculum](#).
- Monitoring students' overall academic performance and collaborating with staff members to develop necessary academic supports for students.
- Consulting with individual students/parents to discuss academic gaps and research potential supports or interventions.
- Delivering core curriculum lessons that are aligned to the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors standards that equip students with the necessary test-taking, time management and/or organization tools to be successful.
- Advising students on dual enrollment opportunities and/or early/middle college opportunities.

Career Development

- Through classroom, small group, and individual student planning, assisting students in developing a post-secondary plan, also known as an Educational Development Plan, that is required for all students starting seventh grade.

- Providing resources to students to engage in career exploration opportunities.
- Delivering career assessments and core curriculum lessons aligned to the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors that assist students in identifying personal characteristics that lead to potential career opportunities.
- Assisting students in post-secondary research to identify training/educational opportunities that lead to the necessary skills/certifications/licensure to pursue a career.
- Facilitating college representative visits, military exploration opportunities and financial aid workshops/assistance for students and parents, as well as organizing and delivering college fairs.
- Advising students on potential Career and Technical Education opportunities that provide them with career exploration, work-based learning experiences and opportunities to earn certifications and credentials leading to entry-level employment.

Social/Emotional Development

- Providing responsive services to meet the needs of students, including individual, group and crisis response counseling.
- Assisting students in developing positive relationships with peers and adults.
- Assisting students who may be experiencing difficult life circumstances.
- Connecting students and families with community resources through referrals.
- Assisting students in developing healthy coping strategies for successful school and life transitions.
- Assisting students in developing interpersonal communication skills.
- Delivering core curriculum lessons aligned to the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors that equip students to become positive members of their school and community.

Advocacy and Leadership

- Advocating for school counseling programs and positive learning environments that focus on student learning and achievement by collaborating and connecting with teachers, administrators, staff, parents, and the community.
- Demonstrating a commitment to continuous learning and professional growth.
- Leading professional development activities for other educators.
- Providing leadership by articulating ways in which school counseling contributes to student achievement.

Program Management and Administration

- Using a data-driven approach to plan, develop, implement and evaluate school counseling programs, resources and services in support of the mission of the school counseling program within the school according to ASCA's Ethical Standards for School Counselors and School Counselor Competencies to facilitate ongoing professional development that improves program management and administration.

- Advocating for the appropriate supervision and evaluation of school counselors using school counselor-specific evaluation tools such as, a counselor/principal management agreement to outline specific goals and responsibilities.

Training and Professional Learning

Michigan's [Top 10 Strategic Education Plan](#) goals include components that speak to the work that school counselors are trained to provide students. Comprehensive school counseling programs that are aligned with the ASCA National Model is critical to student achievement. It is also critical to student achievement that appropriately prepared, certificated and endorsed school counselors are assigned to deliver these programs. As educational leaders, School Counselors participate in ongoing professional development in college and career readiness and mental health initiatives, personal and social issues, technology, and pedagogy so they can provide professional development and support for school-wide initiatives and improvement plans.

Partnership

School counselor professionals collaborate with classroom and subject area teachers to design, teach and assess core curriculum lessons aligned to ASCA's Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success. In addition, school counselors teach students the skills and dispositions needed for navigating the world of career and college readiness. In partnership with classroom teachers, school counselors prepare students for the rigor of college and provide practical strategies that will benefit all students in the world of work. School counselors extend their work beyond the physical walls of the school by providing online resources. As program administrators, school counselors build and maintain counseling resources and guide teachers and students in selecting relevant and resonant resources in print or digital format, as well as digital tools for learning.

Additional MDE Information

- [Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan](#)
- [Michigan's ESSA Plan](#)
- [MDE Endorsement of ASCA](#)

School Counselor Associations

- [American School Counselor Association](#)
- [Michigan School Counselor Association](#)

American School Counselor Association Documents

- [Research Supporting the Value of School Counselors](#)
- [ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors](#)
- [ASCA Position Statements](#)
- [Role of the School Counselor](#)